

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 300115
ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEA-10 DODE-00 MCE-00 ACDA-12 L-03
PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
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P 161034Z DEC 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 300115

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, MASS, NO

SUBJECT: UNDERSECRETARY STOLTENBERG CALL ON ASSISTANT
SECRETARY VEST

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. DURING 3--MINUTE MEETING WITH ASSISTANT
SECRETARY VEST DECEMBER 15, UNDERSECRETARY STOLTENBERG
REVIEWED NORWEGIAN PROBLEMS WITH F-16 THIRD COUNTRY SALES.
HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT HE WAS VERY PLEASED WITH THE OUTCOME
OF HIS DECEMBER 14 DISCUSSIONS AT DEFENSE AND WAS
OPTIMISTIC, THAT WE WERE ON THE "RIGHT TRACK." END SUMMARY.

2. STOLTENBERG SAID HE WAS HERE BECAUSE NORWAY'S STRICT
RULES ON ARMS SALES CREATED A MAJOR PROBLEM IN SELLING
THE F-16 TO IRAN AND POSSIBLY OTHERS. HE SAID NORWAY
PLACED PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON ARTICLE 36 OF THE MOU,
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DEALING WITH COMPENSATION. HE WAS ANXIOUS TO AVOID A
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE OVER SALES TO IRAN. ANY DEBATE ON
THIRD COUNTRY SALES WOULD ALSO CONFLICT WITH NORWEGIAN
INTEREST IN RESTRICTING ARMS SALES WORLDWIDE, A PROJECT
NORWAY WAS COOPERATING ON WITH THE US.

3. STOLTENBERG SAID COMPENSATION WAS ONE OF THE DECISIVE

FACTORS IN SELECTION OF THE F-16 OVER THE FRENCH MIRAGE.

HE THEN LISTED A NUMBER OF POTENTIAL US-NORWEGIAN PROJECTS WHICH HE FELT COULD BE JEOPARDIZED BY DEBATE ON THE F-16, INCLUDING ROLAND, STINGER, CCIS, HELICOPTERS, AND THE P3B.

4. STOLTENBERG DESCRIBED HIS MEETING AT DEFENSE AS VERY SHORT AND "THE BEST OUTCOME WE COULD EXPECT." HE SAID THAT THEY HAD AVOIDED GETTING BOGGED DOWN IN LEGAL AND TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND THAT THE US HAD AGREED TO LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY THAT NORWAY WOULD SELL TO THE US ONLY, WITH THE US THEN DOING AS IT LIKED WITH THE NORWEGIAN COMPONENTS. THE US MIGHT THEN SAY SOMETHING LIKE, "AS FAR AS POSSIBLE WE WILL RESELL THESE TO NATO COUNTRIES ONLY."

5. STOLTENBERG SAID HE WAS PLEASED THAT THIS GENERAL APPROACH HAD BEEN ACCEPTED AS A MEANS TO PROCEED. HE SAID THAT GENERAL FISH, GENERAL ABRAMSON, AND MR. KEAGAN HAD AGREED TO THIS ALTHOUGH THIS WAS AFTER MR. DUNCAN AND MR. SOLCOMBE HAD LEFT THE MEETING. BUT HE SAID DUNCAN HAD EARLIER TOLD HIM HE HOPED AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED WITHIN THIS GROUP, SO HE (STOLTENBERG) FELT HE HAD A DEFINITE COMMITMENT TO PURSUING THIS APPROACH. STOLTENBERG SAID HE WAS OPTIMISTIC AND FELT WE WERE ON CONFIDENTIAL

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THE RIGHT TRACK.

6. STOLTENBERG STRESSED TO VEST THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROBLEM, AND THANKED VEST FOR HIS INTEREST IN THE MATTER. VEST SAID HE HAD ALREADY DISCUSSED IT IN GENERAL WITH ISA ASSISTANT SECRETARY MCGIFFERT. HE ALSO EMPHASIZED TO STOLTENBERG THAT THE NORWEGIAN REQUEST INVOLVED OTHER COUNTRIES AS WELL AND WAS A SENSITIVE PROBLEM. VEST SAID HE WAS GLAD THINGS HAD SO FAR PROGRESSED THIS WELL, AND ASSURED STOLTENBERG HE WOULD CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE MATTER.

7. STOLTENBERG SAID THAT HE HAD ARRIVED WITH NO MANDATE FOR THIS IDEA OF USG PURCHASES OF NORWEGIAN COMPONENTS BUT THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED IT BY PHONE WITH OSLO THE PREVIOUS EVENING, AND HIS SUPERIORS THERE HAD AGREED WITH IT.

8. VEST CONCLUDED BY WARNING THAT THERE WERE BOUND TO BE SNAGS, WHETHER IN THE US OR THE OTHER CO-PRODUCING COUNTRIES, AS WE FOLLOWED THROUGH ON THE RESULTS OF STOLTENBERG'S WASHINGTON TALKS. STOLTENBERG SAID HE WAS

PREPARED TO GO TO THE OTHER CONSORTIUM COUNTRIES TO
EXPLAIN WHAT NORWAY WANTED, BUT HE HAD BEEN ADVISED BY DOD

TO WAIT.

9. FOR BRUSSELS, THE HAGUE AND COPENHAGEN: WE ARE
PRESENTLY DISCUSSING F-16 AND THIRD COUNTRY SALES ISSUES
WITH NORWEGIANS ON BILATERAL BASIS. WHILE DEPARTMENT
(AND NORWEGIANS) WELL AWARE OF MULTILATERAL IMPLICATIONS
AND POTENTIAL INTEREST OF EPG PARTNERS, THIS MESSAGE
FOR YOUR INFO ONLY AND SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT BE DISCUSSED
WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS AT THIS STAGE. VANCE

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